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## How Can U.S. Test Sincerity of Soviet Peace Bids?

WASHINGTON—The United States cannot easily realize the aims of its foreign policy without adopting some standard by which to measure the sincerity of the Soviet Union when it makes peaceful overtures to the American government. Since the aim of Washington's policy is to preserve the peace by inducing the Soviet Union to implement truly peaceful relations with the non-Communist nations, the measure of success of this policy will be the Soviet reaction to it.

The Administration insists that the U.S.S.R. is treacherous in its current manifestations of peaceful tendencies, on the ground that Moscow's intention is to interrupt the development of American strength. If the assumptions on which our policy is based are sound, however, there is a point in the future at which the treachery will be transformed into sincerity—when the Soviet Union will make peaceful gestures not in order to disrupt American policy but in response to, even surrender to, the vigor and soundness of American policy.

Even if the important members of the Administration themselves knew how they would recognize the change when it came, they might be prevented from acting on that recognition by popular attitudes, which generally seem to reflect widespread mistrust of Soviet intentions. The public might show this mistrust at the wrong time, from the Administration's point of view, if officials fail to discuss now publicly and in detail the question of what sort of action by the Soviet Union should be accepted as a reflection of sincere inclinations. Without such discussion, the Administration runs the risk that public

opinion will oppose any reconciliation between the United States and the U.S.S.R.

### *Soviet Gestures of Peace*

The question has become pressing as a result of a series of Soviet actions and statements during the summer, all serving to imply that the Russian government is seeking good relations with Washington. The first action was the appearance in Moscow of the English-language magazine *News*, the announced purpose of which is an "earnest desire to promote, to the best of our ability, closer understanding between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the Anglo-Saxon world."

Another step was the receipt by President Truman on August 6 of a letter from Nikolai Shvernik, president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., enclosing a resolution in which the Presidium proposed the signing of a treaty by the United States, the Soviet Union, France, Britain and China for disarmament and prohibition of manufacture of atomic weapons. The resolution and the letter were the answer to a message which President Truman sent to Shvernik on July 7, 1951, enclosing a resolution adopted by the House and Senate expressing the good will and the peaceful attitude of the United States toward the Russian people. The Soviet press and radio publicized the message from Truman on August 7—another item in the harmony program.

The message from the United States blamed the Soviet Union for the tension between the two countries, and the message from the Soviets shifted the blame to the United States. The letter from Shver-

nik included this note of trust: "This resolution [by the Presidium] expresses the feelings of sincere friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union toward the peoples of the whole world. It speaks of the fact that the Soviet people is unified in its attempts to establish a stable peace and to eliminate the threat of a new war. The Soviet people has no basis for doubting that the American people also do not want war."

The Shvernik letter, the publication of the *News* and the distribution in Russia of President Truman's message have not persuaded the American government that Russia sincerely wants peace on a basis acceptable to this country and other Western nations. The State Department officially labeled the Shvernik message a "propaganda trap." Dismissing the suggestion of a five-power treaty, Michael J. McDermott, special assistant to the Secretary of State, said: "The Kremlin has violated obligations to such an extent that the world has lost confidence in the Soviet's respect for treaties. There is no sense in the Soviet assuming new treaties and obligations until they have restored the confidence of the world in their word by honoring existing obligations."

If the summer's gestures are meaningless, why does the Soviet Union indulge in them? The most obvious answer is that the purpose is to confuse the American Congress as it considers the pending bills for spending on the American military establishment and for foreign aid, and to exploit dissatisfaction in Britain, Italy, France and elsewhere abroad with the sacrifices in the standard of living imposed by the armaments programs being developed

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in conjunction with the United States. Secretary of State Dean Acheson on August 8 expounded another view. He told his press conference that the Shvern timer letter was an effort to sabotage the September conference in San Francisco on the Japanese peace treaty. Moscow's decision, announced on August 13, to send a delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko to the meeting further increased Administration fears that the Soviet Union hopes to block the conclusion of the treaty for Japan.

### *Symptoms of Sincerity*

It is not enough to find that the Soviet proposal and actions lack substance. What is necessary now is to define the steps the Soviet Union can take in order to show sincerity. Secretary Acheson has indicated the outline of action that the United States government would find acceptable, but his comments on this matter were overshadowed by his rejection of the Soviet message. For him, the United Nations provides the key to Soviet sincerity.

"Mr. Shvern timer states that the duty of all peace-loving peoples consists in steadfastly carrying on a policy for the prevention of war," Acheson said, "and for the preservation of peace, or not permitting an armament race, attaining the limitation of arma-

ments and the prohibition of atomic weapons with the establishment of inspection over the implementation of such a prohibition.

"Since the end of the war the United Nations, which was ignored in Mr. Shvern timer's letter, has been working to attain precisely these objectives. But its work has been obstructed continually by the Soviet government. If the Soviet Union now wants to reach concrete realistic agreements, all of these objectives can be realized within the United Nations. However, the Soviet communication brings up again the subject of the vague 'five-power pact.' Why only five powers to make peace? We already have a peace pact, not only among five powers but among 60 nations, in the United Nations Charter."

Another key to sincerity suggested by Acheson revolves around the problem of restricted communications with the Soviet area. "The Iron Curtain," he said, "remains a basic obstacle to the attainment of that peace which will ease the tension in people's minds everywhere. It is vital that it not merely be penetrated occasionally by a ray of truth but that it some day cease to exist—and the sooner the better for the realization of the general hope for a peaceful and secure world." President Truman on August 9 expatiated on this

point at his press conference when he drew attention to "rigid prohibitions laid down by the Soviet government against people from the Soviet Union traveling abroad and people from other countries traveling in the Soviet Union, the rigid restrictions imposed by the Soviet government on the reading of books and magazines and newspapers from outside of the Soviet Union by Soviet people." Another barrier to communication between East and West went up on August 8, when the Polish government ordered the United States to close its information service in Warsaw, and the State Department ordered the Polish Research and Information Service in New York to follow suit.

The Truman and Acheson statements need amplification (combined with a discussion of how far one logically can expect the Soviet Union to go in satisfying any hard and fast definition of sincerity) in order to encourage the American people to think about the goal of our foreign policy. The policy of building strength is commonly accepted in the United States now, to judge by debate and decisions in Congress, but using that strength to negotiate a *modus vivendi* will impose new trials of patience and understanding.

BLAIR BOLLES

## ***Syrian-Israeli Clashes Jeopardize Palestine Armistice***

If any doubts remain that the Palestine war, or at least its effects, are still very much with us, these doubts should have been dispelled by recent events—the murder of King Abdallah by partisans of the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, Israel's current complaint before the Security Council against Egypt's blockade practices at the Suez Canal, and the continuing Israel-Syrian crisis. These are merely the dramatic highlights. The daily incidents along Israel's borders, the plight of the Palestine Arab refugees, and the flight to Israel of Jews from Arab lands, while receiving less attention in the American press, are even more persistent reminders that formal peace between the late belligerents is as yet nowhere in sight.

What has escaped general notice are the signs of breakdown in the Arab-Israel armistice, which has entered its third year. An armistice by its very nature is only a temporary expedient. It merely provides for the cessation of fighting. Left for later negotiation are the political and legal, economic and social problems—the cause and the product of war. In the highly charged Middle East atmosphere today, an

armistice which drags on without hope of evolving into final peace adds to the uncertainty by further complicating the unresolved problems. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the latest Israel-Syrian clash which broke out in March.

The scene and object of the fire and fury was a tiny zone—three separated parcels comprising less than 100 square miles—on the Palestine side of the former international frontier with Syria. The initial quarrel over the slivers of land was intense, causing worrisome delay in framing the Israel-Syrian armistice agreement in April-July 1949. Syria, with troops in part of the area, was anxious to salvage as much as possible from an unsuccessful war and found doubly difficult the surrender of any battle gains. Israel was no less resolved to acquire the contested land, for it fell within the area allotted the Jews by the General Assembly's partition resolution of 1947. Besides, the Syrian-occupied central fragment straddled the Jordan River, bisecting Israel's only plentiful water supply, indispensable for any large-scale agricultural development.

At that time the UN Acting Mediator,

Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, saved the day with a compromise. The armistice was intended to deal solely with military matters, giving neither side any military advantage and insuring that the nonmilitary "rights, claims and positions" of the parties were not prejudiced. Bunche therefore proposed the demilitarization of the Syrian-held splinters, together with contiguous areas never wrested from Israel.

### ***Bunche Compromise***

This compromise fulfilled its immediate purpose of making the last of Israel's proximate neighbors a party to the armistice. It also succeeded as a provisional measure, for, while nearly all complaints placed before the Israel-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission (MAC) in the first 18 months had their source in the demilitarized zone, they were as a rule amicably adjusted. But as the initial hopes of early peace vanished, the issues which had plagued the 1949 negotiations now came back to harass the armistice. Israel's activation at the end of 1950 of a concession which had lain dormant for 16 years brought the crisis to a head.

The concession itself was still valid. Its objectives—the drainage of Lake Hulah and adjacent malarial swamps and the introduction of a comprehensive irrigation system—represented nothing inherently explosive. Moreover, the 40,000-acre Hulah basin, the area to benefit from the project, lies entirely within Israel. With the persistent inflow of new immigrants, the timing of the reclamation seemed only natural, particularly since part of Israel's latest loan from the Export-Import Bank had been obtained for this purpose.

But the project cannot be executed without first enlarging and straightening the bed of a three-mile stretch of the Jordan River—coursing through the demilitarized zone—into which Lake Hulah debouches. This was the only hitch. Even then friction might have been avoided if the scheme had not involved the temporary use of some 100 acres of Arab-owned land and the permanent acquisition of less than 7 more acres. When the owners rejected outright all offers of compensation, Israel proceeded, nevertheless, with the dredging, falling back on expropriation rights given the concessionaires by the late mandatory government in Palestine.

Israel took the position it was correct in following this course, contending the concession is a private right, and private rights are not affected in international law by changes in, or suspension of, sovereignty.

Syria maintained that the armistice agreement was being violated, since expropriation in the demilitarized zone implied the exercise of sovereignty and the completed Hulah project would give Israel military advantages. Lt. Gen. William E. Riley, USMC retired, the chief of staff of the Security Council's Truce Supervision Organization—the body responsible for observing the armistice—declared that military advantages would accrue to both sides equally and denied that Syria had any grounds for complaint against a civilian scheme affecting Israel territory. While not objecting to the concession as such, he nevertheless refuted Israel, stating that the expropriation of land without the consent of its Arab owners interfered with the restoration of normal civilian life in the demilitarized zone.

### *Dilemma for the UN*

Here, then, was the UN's dilemma. If the project were indefinitely shelved, Israel's position would be prejudiced, for it would be prevented from reclaiming its own territory to provide urgently needed homes and work for new citizens. If the Hulah scheme were implemented, Syria's position would be prejudiced, for on the other side of its frontier a teeming, vibrant community would appear where there was none before. Thus, under the armistice agreement as now defined, the Hulah

project posed an insoluble problem.

The shooting, which was begun in March by local Arabs with the moral and material aid of Syria and to which Israel replied in kind, spread throughout the demilitarized zone and beyond. The UN Security Council's intervention checked the clash in May before it got out of hand. But the Council's compromise proposal, which called in effect for a temporary suspension of the drainage scheme, satisfied neither side. After a brief interruption Israel was allowed to resume its work on land not in Arab possession. Syria protested against this decision. Moreover, the Arab landowners, after investigation by the UN chairman of the Israel-Syrian MAC, were reported unanimously opposed to surrendering any part of their holdings for purposes of rental, sale or exchange.

The Hulah crisis is merely a symptom of the larger malaise. The Arabs are even less prone today than two years ago to negotiate formal peace with Israel. Consequently, an agreed adjustment of outmoded terms of the armistice can virtually be ruled out. As long as this stalemate persists, discord is inescapable, with the likelihood of more frequent intervention by the Security Council.

J. C. HUREWITZ

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## ***British Facing New Elections Amid Trials Abroad***

If the sunshine currently turned on by the Kremlin proves to be more than an illusory shaft, what will it do to the collective will of the Western coalition? Many observers, including Secretary of State Dean Acheson, are fearful that its purpose is to dispel the urgent sense of need that has kept the North Atlantic powers working together with some harmony in the past year. The prospects for discord among the 12 partners are never wanting; they are rarely absent, for that matter, at the pact's vital hinge—the relations between Britain and the United States.

There have been striking instances of Anglo-American cooperation recently, but there are also foreshadowed stresses. The necessity for the British defense program has been called into question again by that portion of the Labor party led by Aneurin Bevan, who left Prime Minister Clement R. Attlee's cabinet over this issue in April. Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison has been at pains to disassociate Britain from American policy toward Spain. Other trials which the British face at home and abroad

may produce similar differences between London and Washington.

### *Problems at Home*

The Bevan revolt would probably be of little consequence were it not for two things—the wobbly political foundation on which the Labor government rests and the darkening economic outlook which may soon produce a new installment of Britain's recurrent postwar balance-of-payments crisis. The Labor party has defied the laws of gravity for 18 months now, summoning four- and five-vote majorities through the iron discipline of its parliamentary forces (including the Bevanites) for each test imposed by the Conservative opposition. A new general election cannot be postponed indefinitely, however, and there are signs that the prime minister may choose the autumn for an attempt to recover a firmer grip on the House of Commons. Polls indicate that Labor's popularity, which slumped badly after the election of February 1950, has improved somewhat, although not enough to make the

coming contest anything but another even-money bet.

Meanwhile, Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Gaitskell served notice on Commons early in July that the country was again incurring an export-import deficit largely due to the deterioration of Britain's terms of trade caused by the world raw materials shortage. In the preceding year the value of British imports had risen 43 per cent, while the value of exports was up only 18 per cent. Gold and dollar reserves have been built up sufficiently since the devaluation crisis of 1949 to make the British position less calamitous than previous trials; nonetheless, there is need for a rejuvenated export drive at a time when the defense program is swinging into gear. On July 27 Mr. Gaitskell proposed the reintroduction of some of the economic controls that were intermittently eliminated in the last six years. He also stated that in the fall the government would introduce in Parliament legislation to limit the dividends paid by business enterprises.

The projected curb on dividends has pro-

duced heated controversy. Critics point out that wages rose 157 per cent between 1938 and 1950, while profits increased only 67 per cent. They believe the chancellor's policy is merely a price paid to the Trades Union Congress for continued wage stabilization and is of itself a feeble antidote to inflation.

Whether this move will mollify the Bevanites is a question that may receive some answer at the Labor party's Scarborough conference the first week in October. Mr. Bevan is a strong force in the party organization; the annual conference is also the time and place when Labor's left wing has its greatest hearing. Americans will be most interested in the outcome of the debate on the Bevan demand for a "socialist foreign policy." The recent pamphlet, *One Way Only*, for which the former minister of health wrote a foreword, reintroduces the thesis that Britain should work in cooperation with the United States but retain a "veto" over what leftists frequently call "American adventures." This theme is not new; it was developed in 1947 in another pamphlet, *Keep Left*, the document expressing the sentiments of those who rebelled against the foreign policy of the late Ernest Bevin.

What disturbs some American observers is that Britain has the power to exercise such a veto, and it sometimes has the inclination. United States strength abroad can often be used only in conjunction with the physical bases held by Britain and Commonwealth nations. Mr. Attlee's hurried trip to Washington last December in the midst of the Korean crisis to get President Truman's views on the use of the atom bomb was an example of how such a veto might be invoked.

## Problems Abroad

Aside from the coming electoral contest with the Conservatives and the tensions within the Labor party, the British government has been sorely tried abroad, particularly in the Middle East. American mediation appears to have assisted greatly in easing the rupture with Iran. But the British position in the area was further weakened by the assassination of King Abdallah of Jordan, London's firmest friend in the Arab states. Egypt is now

emulating the Iranians, pressing its demand that British troops be withdrawn from the Suez Canal zone. Foreign Minister Salah el-Din told the Chamber of Deputies on August 6 that Egypt intended to abrogate the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 before the end of the year. The United States delegation at the UN, meanwhile, has associated itself with Britain and France in protesting against the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal, restrictions designed to prevent war materials from reaching Israel but which also were applied against a British freighter destined for Jordan.

Britain has agreed during the summer with the American view that Greece and Turkey should become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But the British would like to see a more inclusive, sturdier arrangement in the eastern Mediterranean. Reports from London indicate that the British will propose the creation of a Middle East Defense Board at the Atlantic Council of Foreign Ministers meeting at Ottawa on September 15. The United States, as well as Britain, France, Turkey and possibly Greece, would be members of this board. And other nations,

including the Arab states and members of the Commonwealth, would be free to join the group, according to their willingness to assist in Middle East defense.

To these acts of Anglo-American cooperation in easing tension in Iran and associating Greece and Turkey with the Atlantic pact must be added the accord reached on the Japanese peace treaty. This is one sign that the widely publicized rift between Washington and London over recognition of Communist China may prove less of a stumbling block to a common policy in the Far East than has been generally assumed. If a Korean truce is ever arranged, the knotty issue of seating the Peiping regime in the United Nations will undoubtedly come to the fore again. It will not be easy to reconcile the American view with that of India, but Britain's attitude, which already lies somewhere between the two, may be helpful in achieving some kind of solution. For the present, however, Foreign Secretary Morrison is awaiting the deeds of the Communist world just as carefully as is Secretary Acheson. His ability to place an article in *Pravda* has not gone to his head.

WILLIAM W. WADE

## FPA Bookshelf

### RECENT BOOKS ON ASIA

*Afghanistan, A Study of Political Developments in Central Asia*, by W. K. Fraser-Tytler. London and New York, Oxford, 1950. \$5.

One of the decisive geographic areas of world history, the Hindu Kush and the Indian Northwest Frontier, through which wave after wave of conquering empires have descended on the north Indian plain, is competently examined by a former British army officer and diplomat. The fruits of wide reading and years of personal experience are revealed in a broad historical perspective and a more detailed examination of developments during the last century, clearly revealing the nature of the dangers which confront Pakistan and India today.

*The State of Asia: A Contemporary Survey*, by Lawrence K. Rosinger and Associates. Issued under the auspices of the American Institute of Pacific Relations. New York, Knopf, 1951. \$6.

A comprehensive analysis of the current situation in historical perspective of East and South Asia, ably edited by a former member of the research staff of the Foreign Policy Association. Chapters on each country are contributed by Owen and Eleanor Lattimore, Shannon McCune, Miriam S. Farley, John M. Maki, Ellen Hammer, Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, S. B. Thomas, Shirley Jenkins, Paul M. Kattenburg and Holden Furber, in addition to portions by the editor.

*Red Storm Over Asia*, by Robert Payne, New York, Macmillan, 1951. \$5.

Much food for thought is contained in this challenging study, by a prolific and perceptive writer on Asian affairs, of the role of communism in the great revolutionary upheaval which is taking place throughout the ancient lands of the Orient. Mr. Payne contends that the outcome will be determined, not by military power, but by the psychological and spiritual struggle for men's minds.

*Red Banners Over Asia*, by O. O. Trullinger. Boston, Beacon Press, 1951. \$3.

The detailed strategy and tactics of the Communist movements in the critical parts of Asia ranging from Pakistan to the Philippines are clearly revealed in this study, which also calls on the West to understand more profoundly the spiritual and social aspects of the Oriental outlook and predicament.

*First Malayan Republic: The Story of the Philippines*, by George A. Malcolm. Boston, Christopher Publishing House, 1951. \$5.

A comprehensive survey of all aspects of the history, economy, international relations and domestic politics of the Philippine Islands, covering primarily the period from the American occupation to the establishment of the Republic, by one who served for many years as Dean of the College of Law, University of the Philippines, and as Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

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